

red the permission of the government to purchase what provisions he stood in need of; that they must be convinced that the Centurion alone was capable of destroying the whole navigation of the port of Canton, or of any other port in China, without running the least risk from all the force the Chinese could collect; that it was true this was not the manner of proceeding between nations in friendship with each other, but it was likewise true that it was not customary for any nation to permit the ships of their friends to starve and sink in their ports, when those friends had money to supply their wants, and only desired liberty to lay it out; that they must confess he and his people had hitherto behaved with great modesty and reserve, but that, as his wants were each day increasing, hunger would at last prove too strong for any restraint, and necessity was acknowledged in all countries to be superior to every other law, and therefore it could not be expected that his crew would long continue to starve in the midst of that plenty to which their eyes were every day witnesses. To this the commodore added, (though perhaps with a less serious air,) that if by the delay of supplying him with fresh provisions his men should be reduced to the necessity of turning cannibals, and preying upon their own species, it was easy to be foreseen, that, independent of their friendship to their comrades, they would, in point of luxury, prefer the plump well-fed Chinese to their own emaciated shipmates. The first mandarin acquiesced in the justness of this reasoning, and told the commodore that he should that night proceed for Canton; that on his arrival a counsel of mandarines would be summoned, of which he himself was a member, and that by being employed in the present commission, he was of course the commodore's advocate; that, as he was fully convinced of the urgency of Mr Anson's necessity, he did not doubt but on his representation the counsel would be of the same opinion; and that all that was demanded would be amply and speedily granted. And with regard to the commodore's complaint of the custom-house of Macao, he undertook to rectify that immediately by his own authority; for, desiring a list to be given him of the quantity of provision necessary for the expense of the ship for a day, he wrote a permit under it, and delivered it to one of his attendants, directing him to see that quantity sent on board early every morn-

ing; and this order, from that time forwards, was punctually complied with.*

When this weighty affair was thus in some degree regulated, the commodore invited him and his two attendant mandarines to dinner, telling them at the same time, that if his provisions, either in kind or quantity, were not what they might expect, they must thank themselves for having confined him to so hard an allowance. One of his dishes was beef, which the Chinese all dislike, though Mr Anson was not apprized of it; this seems to be derived from the India superstition, which for some ages past has made a great progress in China. However, his guests did not entirely fast; for

* Captain Krusenstern, in his very interesting work already referred to, relates an anecdote, which it may amuse the reader to compare with the reasoning of Commodore Anson's now given:

"An English brig (The Harrier) of eighteen guns, sent by Captain Wood, commanding a squadron on that station, to demand indemnification for a Spanish prize stranded on the coast of China, and plundered by the natives, had the audacity, in defiance of the laws of China, which prohibit ships of war going up the Tigris, to force her way as high as Whampoa. Two mandarines, as usual, went aboard the brig at the mouth of the river, to enquire what her cargo was. The captain shewed them a cannon-ball, on which they instantly retired.

"The brig," says K. "had found her way to Whampoa without a pilot; and the captain, with a guard of twelve men, proceeded to Canton to demand the payment of the sum (£80,000.) This daring conduct threw the viceroy into astonishment, and perhaps occasioned him some terror; for nothing but the excessive cowerdise of the Chinese could have deterred him from noticing the affront. They, indeed, shewed a disposition after the captain had quitted Canton of avenging themselves, but this altogether in their customary manner; and I was assured, that the viceroy, as indemnification for this insult of the English captain, had imposed a heavy fine upon the Kohong (a company of merchants possessing the monopoly of the European trade,) although the members of this body could have no concern in the transaction." Capt. K. is decidedly of opinion, that nothing but resolute conduct will overcome the fickleness and knavery of the Chinese. He pays a high compliment to our countrymen, especially Mr Dr. Amund, president of the factory, who interfered in his behalf when at Whampoa, and with effect, when they could easily have thwarted his plan, and embroiled his government with that of China. "That they pursued a very different line of conduct," says he, "will appear by the above account of their proceedings; nor can I sufficiently rejoice at the zeal and eagerness manifested by them in this business. Had we been detained only twenty-four hours longer (he had applied for leave to depart, which was granted with much difficulty, and actually revoked a day after he had gone,) we must have fallen into the absolute power of these savages, who have been emboldened by an useless moderation, not only to call the polite nations of Europe barbarians, but also to treat them as such."—E.

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for the three mandarines completely finished the white part of four large fowls. But they were extremely embarrassed with their knives and forks, and were quite incapable of making use of them: So that, after some fruitless attempts to help themselves, which were sufficiently awkward, one of the attendants was obliged to cut their meat in small pieces for them. But whatever difficulty they might have in complying with the European manner of eating, they seemed not to be novices in drinking. The commodore excused himself in this part of the entertainment, under the pretence of illness; but there being another gentleman present, of a florid and jovial complexion, the chief mandarine clapped him on the shoulder, and told him by the interpreter, that certainly he could not plead sickness, and therefore insisted on his bearing him company; and that gentleman perceiving, that after they had dispatched four or five bottles of Frontinac, the mandarine still continued unruffled, he ordered a bottle of citron-water to be brought up, which the Chinese seemed much to relish; and this being near finished, they arose from table in appearance cool and uninfluenced by what they had drank, and the commodore having, according to custom, made the mandarine a present, they all departed in the same vessels that brought them.

After their departure, the commodore with great impatience expected the resolution of the council, and the necessary licences for his refitment. For it must be observed, as hath already appeared from the preceding narration, that he could neither purchase stores nor necessities with his money, nor did any kind of workmen dare to engage themselves to work for him, without the permission of the government first obtained. And in the execution of these particular injunctions, the magistrates never fail of exercising great severity, they, notwithstanding the fustian eulogiums bestowed on them by the catholic missionaries and their European copiers, being composed of the same fragile materials with the rest of mankind, and often making use of the authority of the law, not to suppress crimes, but to enrich themselves by the pillage of those who commit them; for capital punishments are rare in China, the effeminate genius of the nation, and their strong attachment to lucre, disposing them rather to make use of fines; and hence arises no inconsiderable profit to those who com-
 pose

pose their tribunals: Consequently prohibitions of all kinds, particularly such as the alluring prospect of great profit may often tempt the subject to infringe, cannot but be favourite institutions in such a government. But to return: *gallant*

Some time before this, Captain Saunders took his passage to England on board a Swedish ship, and was charged with dispatches from the commodore; and soon after, in the month of December, Captain Mitchel, Colonel Cracherode, and Mr Tassel, one of the agent-victuallers, with his nephew Mr Charles Harriot, embarked on board some of our company's ships; and I, having obtained the commodore's leave to return home, embarked with them. *to be inserted*

Whilst we lay here at Macao, we were informed by some of the officers of our Indiamen, that the *Severn* and *Pearl*, the two ships of our squadron, which had separated from us off Cape Noir, were safely arrived at Rio Janeiro on the coast of Brazil. I have formerly taken notice, that at the time of their separation, we apprehended them to be lost. And there were many reasons which greatly favoured this suspicion: For we knew that the *Severn* in particular was extremely sickly; and this was the more obvious to the rest of the ships, as, in the preceding part of the voyage, her commander, Captain Legg, had been remarkable for his exemplary punctuality in keeping his station, till, for the last ten days before his separation, his crew was so diminished and enfeebled, that with his utmost efforts it was not possible for him to maintain it. Whatever was the cause of it, the *Severn* was by much the most sickly of the squadron: For before her departure from St Catharines, she buried more men than any of them, insomuch that the commodore was obliged to recruit her with a number of fresh hands; and the mortality still continuing, she was supplied with men a second time at sea, after our setting sail from St Julians; and, notwithstanding these different reinforcements, she was at last reduced to the distressed condition I have already mentioned.

Notwithstanding the favourable disposition of the mandarine governor of Janson, at his leaving Mr Anson, several days were elapsed before he had any advice from him; and Mr Anson was privately informed there were great debates in council upon his affair; partly perhaps owing to its being so unusual a case, and in part to the influence, as I suppose, of the French at Canton: For they had a country-
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positions of all kinds, of great profit may be made, but he favoured his return: ^{and} he took his passage was charged with soon after, in the Colonel Cracherode, with his neighbours, with his neighbours, some of our board some of our the commodore's em. ^{and} he informed by some the Severn and Pearl, had separated from Rio Janeiro on the notice, that at the led them to be lost. greatly favoured this in particular was obvious to the rest of the voyage, her remarkable for his station, till, for the his crew was so diminished most efforts it was Whatever was the the most sickly of the from St Catharines, in, insomuch that the er with a number of continuing, she was sup- after our setting sail g these different rein- to the distressed condi- position of the man- ving Mr Anson, seve- any advice from him; and there were great de- ly perhaps owing to its to the influence, as I For they had a country- man

man and fast friend residing on the spot, who spoke the language very well, and was not unacquainted with the venality of the government, nor with the persons of several of the magistrates, and consequently could not be at a loss for means of traversing the assistance desired by Mr Anson. And this opposition of the French was not merely the effect of national prejudice or contrariety of political interests, but was in good measure owing to their vanity, a motive of much more weight with the generality of mankind, than any attachment to the public service of their community: For, the French pretending their Indiamen to be men of war, their officers were apprehensive that any distinction granted to Mr Anson, on account of his bearing the king's commission, would render them less considerable in the eyes of the Chinese, and would establish a prepossession at Canton in favour of ships of war, by which they, as trading vessels, would suffer in their importance: And I wish the affectation of endeavouring to pass for men of war, and the fear of sinking in the estimation of the Chinese, if the Centurion was treated in a different manner from themselves, had been confined to the officers of the French ships only.* However, notwithstanding all these obstacles, it should seem that the representation of the commodore to the mandarines of the facility with which he could right himself, if justice were denied him, had at last its effect: For, on the 6th of January, in the morning, the governor of Janson, the commodore's advocate, sent down the viceroy of Canton's warrant for the refitment of the Centurion, and for supplying her people with all they wanted; and the next day a number of Chinese smiths and carpenters went on board to agree for the work. They demanded at first to the amount of a thousand pounds sterling for the necessary repairs of the ship, the boats, and the masts: This the commodore seemed to think an unreasonable sum, and endeavoured to persuade them to work by the day; but that proposal they would not hearken to; so it was at last agreed, that the carpenters should have to the amount of about six hundred pounds; and that the smiths should be paid for their iron-work by weight, allowing them at the rate

* This sly insinuation, it is pretty evident from the preceding narrative, is directed against some of the English merchants.—E.

rate of three pounds a hundred nearly for the small work, and forty-six shillings for the large.

This being regulated, the commodore exerted himself to get this most important business completed; I mean the heaving down the *Centurion*, and examining the state of her bottom: For this purpose the first lieutenant was dispatched to Canton to hire two country vessels, called in their language junks, one of them being intended to heave down by, and the other to serve as a magazine for the powder and ammunition: At the same time the ground was smoothed on one of the neighbouring islands, and a large tent was pitched for lodging the lumber and provisions, and near a hundred Chinese caulkers were soon set to work on the decks and sides of the ship. But all these preparations, and the getting ready the careening gear, took up a great deal of time; for the Chinese caulkers, though they worked very well, were far from being expeditious; and it was the 26th of January before the junks arrived; and the necessary materials, which were to be purchased at Canton, came down very slowly, partly from the distance of the place, and partly from the delays and backwardness of the Chinese merchants. And in this interval Mr Anson had the additional perplexity to discover that his fore-mast was broken asunder above the upper deck partners and was only kept together by the fishes which had been formerly clapt upon it.

However, the *Centurion's* people made the most of their time, and exerted themselves the best they could; and as, by clearing the ship, the carpenters were enabled to come at the leak, they took care to secure that effectually, whilst the other preparations were going forwards. The leak was found to be below the fifteen-foot mark, and was principally occasioned by one of the bolts being wore away and loose in the joining of the stem where it was scarfed.

At last all things being prepared, they, on the 22d of February, in the morning, hove out the first course of the *Centurion's* starboard side, and had the satisfaction to find that her bottom appeared sound and good; and, the next day (having by that time completed the new sheathing of the first course) they righted her again, to set up anew the careening rigging which stretched much. Thus they continued heaving down, and often righting the ship from a suspicion

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suspicion of their careening tackle, till the 3d of March; when, having completed the paying and sheathing the bottom, which proved to be every where very sound, they for the last time righted the ship to their great joy, for not only the fatigue of careening had been considerable, but they had been apprehensive of being attacked by the Spaniards, whilst the ship was thus incapacitated for defence. Nor were their fears altogether groundless; for they learnt afterwards by a Portuguese vessel, that the Spaniards at Manilla had been informed that the Centurion was in the Typa, and intended to careen there; and that thereupon the governor had summoned his council, and had proposed to them to endeavour to burn her whilst she was careening, which was an enterprise, which, if properly conducted, might have put them in great danger: They were farther told that this scheme was not only proposed, but resolved on; and that a captain of a vessel had actually undertaken to perform the business for forty thousand dollars, which he was not to receive unless he succeeded; but the governor pretending that there was no treasure in the royal chest, and insisting that the merchants should advance the money, and they refusing to comply with the demand, the affair was dropped: Perhaps the merchants suspected that the whole was only a pretext to get forty thousand dollars from them; and indeed this was affirmed by some who bore the governor no good will, but with what truth it is difficult to ascertain.

As soon as the Centurion was righted, they took in her powder and gunner's stores, and proceeded in getting in their guns as fast as possible, and then used their utmost expedition in repairing the fore-mast, and in completing the other articles of her refitment. And being thus employed, they were alarmed on the 10th of March, by a Chinese fisherman, who brought them intelligence that he had been on board a large Spanish ship off the grand Ladrone, and that there were two more in company with her: He added several particulars to his relation, as that he had brought one of their officers to Macao; and that, on this, boats went off early in the morning from Macao to them: And the better to establish the belief of his veracity, he said he desired no money if his information should not prove true. This was presently believed to be the fore-mentioned

mentioned expedition from Manilla, and the commodore immediately fitted his cannon and small arms in the best manner he could for defence; and having then his pinnace and cutter in the offing, who had been ordered to examine a Portuguese vessel which was getting under sail, he sent them the advice he had received, and directed them to look out strictly: But no such ships ever appeared, and they were soon satisfied the whole of the story was a fiction; though it was difficult to conceive what reason could induce the fellow to be at such extraordinary pains to impose on them.

It was the beginning of April before they had new-rigged the ship, stowed their provisions and water on board, and had fitted her for the sea; and before this time the Chinese grew very uneasy, and extremely desirous that she should be gone; either not knowing, or pretending not to believe, that this was a point the commodore was as eagerly set on as they could be. On the 3d of April, two mandarine boats came on board from Macao to urge his departure; and this having been often done before, though there had been no pretence to suspect Mr Anson of any affected delays, he at this last message answered them in a determined tone, desiring them to give him no further trouble, for he would go when he thought proper, and not before. On this rebuke the Chinese (though it was not in their power to compel him to be gone) immediately prohibited all provisions from being carried on board him, and took such care that their injunctions should be complied with, that from that time forwards nothing could be purchased at any rate whatever.

On the 6th of April, the *Centurion* weighed from the *Tupa*, and warped to the southward; and by the 13th, she was got into Macao road, completing her water as she passed along, so that there remained now very few articles more to attend to, and her whole business being finished by the 19th, she, at three in the afternoon of that day, weighed and made sail, and stood to sea.

SECTION XXX.

From Macao to Cape Espiritu Santo; the taking of the Manilla Galleon, and returning back again.

THE commodore was now got to sea, with his ship very well refitted, his stores replenished, and an additional stock of provisions on board: His crew too was somewhat reinforced; for he had entered twenty-three men during his stay at Macao, the greatest part of which were Lascars or Indian sailors, and some few Dutch. He gave out at Macao that he was bound to Batavia, and thence to England; and though the westerly monsoon was now set in, when that passage is considered as impracticable, yet, by the confidence he had expressed in the strength of his ship, and the dexterity of his people, he had persuaded not only his own crew, but the people at Macao likewise, that he proposed to try this unusual experiment; so that there were many letters put on board him by the inhabitants of Canton and Macao for their friends at Batavia.

But his real design was of a very different nature: For he knew, that instead of one annual ship from Acapulco to Manilla, there would be this year in all probability two; since, by being before Acapulco, he had prevented one of them from putting to sea the preceding season. He therefore resolved to cruise for these returning vessels off Cape Espiritu Santo, on the island of Samal, which is the first land they always make in the Philippine Islands. And as June is generally the month in which they arrive there, he doubted not but he should get to his intended station time enough to intercept them. It is true, they were said to be stout vessels, mounting forty-four guns a-piece, and carrying above five hundred hands, and might be expected to return in company; and he himself had but two hundred and twenty-seven hands on board, of which near thirty were boys: But this disproportion of strength did not deter him, as he knew his ship to be much better fitted for a sea-engagement than theirs, and as he had reason to expect that his men would exert themselves in the most extraordinary manner, when they had in view the immense wealth of these Manilla galleons.

This

This project the commodore had resolved on in his own thoughts, ever since his leaving the coast of Mexico. And the greatest mortification which he received, from the various delays he had met with in China, was his apprehension, lest he might be thereby so long retarded as to let the galleons escape him. Indeed, at Macao it was incumbent on him to keep these views extremely secret; for there being a great intercourse and a mutual connection of interests between that port and Manilla, he had reason to fear, that if his designs were discovered, intelligence would be immediately sent to Manilla, and measures taken to prevent the galleons from falling into his hands: But being now at sea, and entirely clear of the coast, he summoned all his people on the quarter-deck, and informed them of his resolution to cruise for the two Manilla ships, of whose wealth they were not ignorant. He told them he should chuse a station, where he could not fail of meeting with them; and though they were stout ships, and full manned, yet, if his own people behaved with their accustomed spirit, he was certain he should prove too hard for them both, and that one of them at least could not fail of becoming his prize: He further added, that many ridiculous tales had been propagated about the strength of the sides of these ships, and their being impenetrable to cannon-shot; that these fictions had been principally invented to palliate the cowardice of those who had formerly engaged them; but he hoped there were none of those present weak enough to give credit to so absurd a story: For his own part, he did assure them upon his word, that, whenever he met with them, he would fight them so near, that they should find, his bullets, instead of being stopped by one of their sides, should go through them both.

This speech of the commodore's was received by his people with great joy: For no sooner had he ended, than they expressed their approbation, according to naval custom, by three strenuous cheers, and all declared their determination to succeed or perish, whenever the opportunity presented itself. And now their hopes, which, since their departure from the coast of Mexico, had entirely subsided, were again revived; and they all persuaded themselves, that, notwithstanding the various casualties and disappointments they had hitherto met with, they should yet be repaid the price of their fatigues, and should at last return home enriched with

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with the spoils of the enemy: For, firmly relying on the assurances of the commodore, that they should certainly meet with the vessels, they were all of them too sanguine to doubt a moment of mastering them; so that they considered themselves as having them already in their possession. And this confidence was so universally spread through the whole ship's company, that, the commodore having taken some Chinese sheep to sea with him for his own provision, and one day enquiring of his butcher, why, for some time past, he had seen no mutton at his table, asking him if all the sheep were killed, the butcher very seriously replied, that there were indeed two sheep left, but that, if his honour would give him leave, he proposed to keep those for the entertainment of the general of the galleons.

When the *Centurion* left the port of Macao, she stood for some days to the westward; and, on the first of May, they saw part of the island of Formosa; and, standing thence to the southward, they, on the 4th of May, were in the latitude of the Bashee islands, as laid down by Dampier; but they suspected his account of inaccuracy, as they found that he had been considerably mistaken in the latitude of the south end of Formosa: For this reason they kept a good look-out, and about seven in the evening discovered from the mast-head five small islands, which were judged to be the Bashees, and they had afterwards a sight of *Bottle Tobago Xima*. By this means they had an opportunity of correcting the position of the Bashee islands, which had been hitherto laid down twenty-five leagues too far to the westward: For, by their observations, they esteemed the middle of these islands to be in $21^{\circ} 4'$ north, and to bear from *Botel Tobago Xima* S.S.E. twenty leagues distant, that island itself being in $21^{\circ} 57'$ north.*

After

* The Bashee Islands were so called by Dampier from the name of a liquor used by the natives. Four of them are inhabited, and are tolerably fertile, producing sugar canes, pine apples, plantains, potatoes, &c. and having some hogs and goats. The inhabitants, who are reckoned a harmless and peaceable race, are said to resemble the Japanese, and probably are derived from them. The unfortunate *Peyreuse* visited one of the most northerly of these islands, and found its latitude to be $21^{\circ} 9' 13''$ N. *Arrowsmith's* map lays them down very particularly. The passage betwixt Formosa and these islands is held very dangerous on account of the rock called *Vele Rete*, the precise situation of which is matter of discord among the navigators. Captain *Krusenstern* went through this passage during the night, and that a stormy one too, with perfect safety, keeping the middle of

After getting a sight of the *Bashee* islands, they stood between the S. and S.W. for Cape *Espiritu Santo*; and, the 30th of May at noon, they first discovered that cape, which about four o'clock they brought to bear S.S.W. about eleven leagues distant. It appeared to be of a moderate height, with several round hummocks on it. As it was known that there were centinels placed upon this cape to make signals to the *Acapulco* ship, when she first falls in with the land, the commodore immediately tacked, and ordered the top-gallant sails to be taken in, to prevent being discovered; and, this being the station in which it was resolved to cruise for the galleons, they kept the cape between the south and the west, and endeavoured to confine themselves between the latitude of $12^{\circ} 50'$, and $13^{\circ} 5'$, the cape itself lying, by their observations, in $12^{\circ} 40'$ north, and 4° of east longitude from *Botel Tobago Xima*.

It was the last of May, when they arrived off this cape; and the month of June being that in which the *Manilla* ships are usually expected, the *Centurion's* people were now waiting each hour with the utmost impatience for the happy crisis which was to balance the account of all their past calamities. As from this time there was but small employment for the crew, the commodore ordered them almost every day to be exercised in the management of the great guns, and in the use of their small arms. This had been his practice, more or less, at all convenient seasons, during the whole course of his voyage; and the advantages which he received from it, in his engagement with the galleon, were an ample recompence for all his care and attention.*

The galleons being now expected, the commodore made all necessary preparations for receiving them, having hoisted out his long-boat, and lashed her alongside, that the ship might be ready for engaging, if they fell in with the galleons in the night. All this time too he was very solicitous to keep at such a distance from the cape, as not to be discovered:

the channel, and having men continually on the look-out. He seems to prefer the position of *Vele Rete* and its reef of rocks, (of about two miles circuit,) as given by *Broughton*, according to whose observations the latitude is $21^{\circ} 45' 24''$, and the longitude $239^{\circ} 15'$.—E.

* The original has here some reflections on the importance and advantages of exercising the seamen in firing, &c. which, however good, are too common and obvious to merit insertion. The art of destroying men's lives has been abundantly improved since our author's day.—E.

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vered: But it hath been since learnt, that notwithstanding his care, he was seen from the land; and advice of him was sent to Manilla, where it was at first disbelieved, but on reiterated intelligence (for it seems he was seen more than once) their merchants were alarmed, and the governor was applied to, who undertook (the commerce supplying the necessary sums) to fit out a force consisting of two ships of thirty-two guns, one of twenty guns, and two sloops of ten guns each, to attack the *Centurion* on her station: And some of these vessels did actually weigh with this view; but the principal ship not being ready, and the monsoon being against them, the commerce and the governor disagreed, and the enterprize was laid aside. This frequent discovery of the *Centurion* from the shore was somewhat extraordinary; for the pitch of the cape is not high, and she usually kept from ten to fifteen leagues distant; though once indeed, by an indraught of the tide, as was supposed, they found themselves in the morning within seven leagues of the land.

As the month of June advanced, the expectancy and impatience of the commodore's people each day increased. And I think no better idea can be given of their great eagerness on this occasion, than by copying a few paragraphs from the journal of an officer, who was then on board, as it will, I presume, be a more natural picture of the full attachment of their thoughts to the business of their cruise, than can be given by any other means. The paragraphs I have selected, as they occur in order of time, are as follow:

"May 31. Exercising our men at their quarters, in great expectation of meeting with the galleons very soon; this being the eleventh of June their stile."

"June 3. Keeping in our stations, and looking out for the galleons."

"June 5. Begin now to be in great expectation, this being the middle of June their stile."

"June 11. Begin to grow impatient at not seeing the galleons."

"June 13. The wind having blown fresh easterly for the forty-eight hours past, gives us great expectations of seeing the galleons soon."

"June 15. Cruising on and off, and looking out strictly."

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"June 19. This being the last day of June, N.S. the galleons, if they arrive at all, must appear soon."

From these samples it is sufficiently evident, how completely the treasure of the galleons had engrossed their imagination, and how anxiously they passed the latter part of their cruise, when the certainty of the arrival of these vessels was dwindled down to probability only, and that probability became each hour more and more doubtful. However, on the 20th of June, O. S. being just a month from their arrival on their station, they were relieved from this state of uncertainty; when, at sun-rise, they discovered a sail from the mast-head, in the S.E. quarter. On this, a general joy spread through the whole ship; for they had no doubt but this was one of the galleons, and they expected soon to see the other. The commodore instantly stood towards her, and at half an hour after seven they were near enough to see her from the Centurion's deck; at which time the galleon fired a gun, and took in her top-gallant sails, which was supposed to be a signal to her consort, to hasten her up; and therefore the Centurion fired a gun to leeward, to amuse her. The commodore was surprised to find, that in all this time the galleon did not change her course, but continued to bear down upon him; for he hardly believed, what afterwards appeared to be the case, that she knew his ship to be the Centurion, and resolved to fight him.

About noon the commodore was little more than a league distant from the galleon, and could fetch her wake, so that she could not now escape; and, no second ship appearing, it was concluded that she had been separated from her consort. Soon after, the galleon haled up her fore-sail, and brought-to under top-sails, with her head to the northward, hoisting Spanish colours, and having the standard of Spain flying at the top-gallant-mast-head. Mr Anson, in the mean time, had prepared all things for an engagement on board the Centurion, and had taken all possible care, both for the most effectual exertion of his small strength, and for the avoiding the confusion and tumult too frequent in actions of this kind. He picked out about thirty of his choicest hands and best marksmen, whom he distributed into his tops, and who fully answered his expectation, by the signal services they performed. As he had not hands enough remaining to quarter a sufficient number to each great

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great gun, in the customary manner, he therefore, on his lower tire, fixed only two men to each gun, who were to be solely employed in loading it, whilst the rest of his people were divided into different gangs of ten or twelve men each, who were constantly moving about the decks, to run out and fire such guns as were loaded. By this management he was enabled to make use of all his guns; and, instead of firing broad-sides with intervals between them, he kept up a constant fire without intermission, whence he doubted not to procure very signal advantages; for it is common with the Spaniards to fall down upon the decks when they see a broadside preparing, and to continue in that posture till it is given; after which they rise again, and, presuming the danger to be for some time over, work their guns, and fire with great briskness, till another broad-side is ready: But the firing gun by gun, in the manner directed by the commodore, rendered this practice of theirs impossible.

The Centurion being thus prepared, and nearing the galleon apace, there happened, a little after noon, several squalls of wind and rain, which often obscured the galleon from their sight; but whenever it cleared up, they observed her resolutely lying-to; and, towards one o'clock, the Centurion hoisted her broad pendant and colours, she being then within gun-shot of the enemy. And the commodore observing the Spaniards to have neglected clearing their ship till that time, as he then saw them throwing overboard cattle and lumber, he gave orders to fire upon them with the chace-guns, to embarrass them in their work, and prevent them from completing it, though his general directions had been not to engage till they were within pistol-shot. The galleon returned the fire with two of her stern-chasers; and, the Centurion getting her sprit-sail-yard fore and aft, that if necessary she might be ready for boarding, the Spaniards in a bravado rigged their sprit-sail-yard fore and aft likewise. Soon after, the Centurion came a-breast of the enemy within pistol-shot, keeping to the leeward with a view of preventing them from putting before the wind, and gaining the port of Jalapay, from which they were about seven leagues distant. And now the engagement began in earnest, and, for the first half hour, Mr Anson over-reached the galleon, and lay on her bow; where, by the great wideness of his ports, he could traverse almost all his guns upon the enemy, whilst the galleon could only

bring a part of hers to bear. Immediately on the commencement of the action, the mats, with which the galleon had stuffed her netting, took fire, and burnt violently, blazing up half as high as the mizen-top. This accident (supposed to be caused by the Centurion's wads) threw the enemy into great confusion, and at the same time alarmed the commodore, for he feared least the galleon should be burnt, and least he himself too might suffer by her driving on board him. But the Spaniards at last freed themselves from the fire, by cutting away the netting, and tumbling the whole mass, which was in flames, into the sea. But still the Centurion kept her first advantageous position, firing her cannon with great regularity and briskness, whilst at the same time the galleon's decks lay open to her top-men, who, having at their first volley driven the Spaniards from their tops, made prodigious havock with their small-arms, killing or wounding every officer but one that ever appeared on the quarter-deck, and wounding in particular the general of the galleon himself. And though the Centurion, after the first half hour, lost her original situation, and was close alongside the galleon, and the enemy continued to fire briskly for near an hour longer, yet at last the commodore's grape-shot swept their decks so effectually, and the number of their slain and wounded was so considerable, that they began to fall into great disorder, especially as the general, who was the life of the action, was no longer capable of exerting himself. Their embarrassment was visible from on board the commodore. For the ships were so near, that some of the Spanish officers were seen running about with great assiduity, to prevent the desertion of their men from their quarters: But all their endeavours were in vain; for after having, as a last effort, fired five or six guns with more judgment than usual, they gave up the contest; and, the galleon's colours being singed off the ensign-staff in the beginning of the engagement, she struck the standard at her main-top-gallant-mast-head, the person who was employed to do it, having been in imminent peril of being killed, had not the commodore, who perceived what he was about, given express orders to his people to desist from firing.

Thus was the Centurion possessed of this rich prize, amounting in value to near a million and a half of dollars. She was called the *Nostra Signora de Cabadonga*, and was commanded

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commanded by the general Don Jeronimó de Montero, a Portuguese by birth, and the most approved officer for skill and courage of any employed in that service. The galleon was much larger than the Centurion, had five hundred and fifty men and thirty-six guns mounted for action, besides twenty-eight pidreroes in her gunwale, quarters and tops, each of which carried a four-pound ball. She was very well furnished with small arms, and was particularly provided against boarding, both by her close quarters, and by a strong net-work of two-inch rope, which was laced over her waist, and was defended by half pikes. She had sixty-seven killed in the action, and eighty-four wounded, whilst the Centurion had only two killed, and a lieutenant and sixteen wounded, all of whom, but one, recovered: Of so little consequence are the most destructive arms in untutored and unpractised hands.

The treasure thus taken by the Centurion having been for at least eighteen months the great object of their hopes, it is impossible to describe the transport on board, when, after all their reiterated disappointments, they at last saw their wishes accomplished. But their joy was near being suddenly damped by a most tremendous incident: For no sooner had the galleon struck, than one of the lieutenants coming to Mr Anson to congratulate him on his prize, whispered him at the same time, that the Centurion was dangerously on fire near the powder-room. The commodore received this dreadful news without any apparent emotion, and, taking care not to alarm his people, gave the necessary orders for extinguishing it, which was happily done in a short time, though its appearance at first was extremely terrible. It seems some cartridges had been blown up by accident between decks, by which a quantity of oakum in the after-hatch-way, near the after-powder-room, was set on fire; and the great smother and smoke of the oakum occasioned the apprehension of a more extended and mischievous fire. At the same instant, too, the galleon fell on board the Centurion on the starboard quarter, but she was cleared without doing or receiving any considerable damage.

The commodore made his first lieutenant, Mr Saumarez, captain of this prize, appointing her a post-ship in his majesty's service. Captain Saumarez, before night, sent on board the Centurion all the Spanish prisoners, but such as were thought the most proper to be retained to assist in na-

vigating the galleon. And now the commodore learnt, from some of the prisoners, that the other ship, which he had kept in the port of Acapulco the preceding year, instead of returning in company with the present prize, as was expected, had set sail from Acapulco alone much sooner than usual, and had, in all probability, got into the port of Manilla long before the Centurion arrived off Espiritu Santo; so that Mr Anson, notwithstanding his present success, had great reason to regret his loss of time at Macao, which prevented him from taking two rich prizes instead of one.

The commodore, when the action was ended, resolved to make the best of his way with his prize for the river of Canton, being in the mean time fully employed in securing his prisoners, and in removing the treasure from on board the galleon into the Centurion. The last of these operations was too important to be postponed; for as the navigation to Canton was through seas but little known, and where, from the season of the year, much bad weather might be expected, it was of great consequence that the treasure should be sent on board the Centurion, which ship, by the presence of the commander in chief, the greater number of her hands, and her other advantages, was doubtless much safer against all the casualties of winds and seas than the galleon; and the securing the prisoners was a matter of still more consequence, as not only the possession of the treasure, but the lives of the captors, depended thereon. This was indeed an article which gave the commodore much trouble and disquietude; for they were above double the number of his own people; and some of them, when they were brought on board the Centurion, and had observed how slenderly she was manned, and the large proportion which the striplings bore to the rest, could not help expressing themselves with great indignation to be thus beaten by a handful of boys. The method, which was taken to hinder them from rising, was by placing all but the officers and the wounded in the hold, where, to give them as much air as possible, two hatch-ways were left open; but then (to avoid all danger, whilst the Centurion's people should be employed upon the deck) there was a square partition of thick planks, made in the shape of a funnel, which enclosed each hatch-way on the lower deck, and reached to that directly over it on the upper deck; these funnels served to communicate the air to the hold better than could have been

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been done without them; and, at the same time, added greatly to the security of the ship; for they being seven or eight feet high, it would have been extremely difficult for the Spaniards to have clambered up; and still to augment that difficulty, four swivel-guns loaded with musquet-bullets were planted at the mouth of each funnel, and a sentinel with lighted match constantly attended, prepared to fire into the hold amongst them, in case of any disturbance. Their officers, who amounted to seventeen or eighteen, were all lodged in the first lieutenant's cabin, under a constant guard of six men; and the general, as he was wounded, lay in the commodore's cabin with a sentinel always with him; and they were all informed, that any violence or disturbance would be punished with instant death. And that the Centurion's people might be at all times prepared, if, notwithstanding these regulations, any tumult should arise, the small arms were constantly kept loaded in a proper place, whilst all the men went armed with cutlasses and pistols; and no officer ever pulled off his cloaths, and when he slept had always his arms lying ready by him.

These measures were obviously necessary, considering the hazards to which the commodore and his people would have been exposed, had they been less careful. Indeed, the sufferings of the poor prisoners, though impossible to be alleviated, were much to be commiserated; for the weather was extremely hot, the stench of the hold loathsome, beyond all conception, and their allowance of water but just sufficient to keep them alive, it not being practicable to spare them more than at the rate of a pint a-day for each, the crew themselves having only an allowance of a pint and a half. All this considered, it was wonderful that not a man of them died during their long confinement, except three of the wounded, who died the same night they were taken; though it must be confessed, that the greatest part of them were strangely metamorphosed by the heat of the hold; for when they were first taken, they were slightly, robust fellows; but when, after above a month's imprisonment, they were discharged in the river of Canton, they were reduced to mere skeletons; and their air and looks corresponded much more to the conception formed of ghosts and spectres, than to the figure and appearance of real men.

Thus employed in securing the treasure and the prisoners,
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the commodore stood for the river of Canton; and, on the 30th of June, at six in the evening, got sight of Cape Delangano, which then bore west ten leagues distant; and, the next day, he made the Bashee islands, and the wind being so far to the northward, that it was difficult to weather them, it was resolved to stand through between Grafton and Monmouth islands, where the passage seemed to be clear; but in getting through, the sea had a very dangerous aspect, for it rippled and foamed, as if it had been full of breakers, which was still more terrible, as it was then night. But the ships got through very safe, (the prize always keeping a-head) and it was found that the appearance which had alarmed them had been occasioned only by a strong tide. I must here observe, that though the Bashee islands are usually reckoned to be no more than five, yet there are many more lying about them to the westward, which, as the channels amongst them are not at all known, makes it advisable for ships, rather to pass to the northward or southward, than through them; and indeed the commodore proposed to have gone to the northward, between them and Formosa, had it been possible for him to have weathered them. From hence the Centurion steering the proper course for the river of Canton, she, on the 8th of July, discovered the island of Supata, the westernmost of the Lema islands. This island they made to be an hundred and thirty-nine leagues distant from Grafton's island, and to bear from it north 82°, 37' west: And, on the 11th, having taken on board two Chinese pilots, one for the Centurion, and the other for the prize, they came to an anchor off the city of Macao.

By this time the particulars of the cargo of the galleon were well ascertained, and it was found that she had on board 1,313,843 picces of eight, and 35,682 oz. of virgin silver, besides some cochineal, and a few other commodities, which, however, were but of small account, in comparison of the specie. And this being the commodore's last prize, it hence appears, that all the treasure taken by the Centurion was not much short of 400,000*l.* independent of the ships and merchandise, which she either burnt or destroyed, and which, by the most reasonable estimation, could not amount to so little as 600,000*l.* more; so that the whole loss of the enemy, by our squadron, did doubtless exceed a million sterling. To which, if there be added the great

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great expence of the court of Spain, in fitting out Pizarro, and in paying the additional charges in America, incurred on our account, together with the loss of their men of war, the total of all these articles will be a most exorbitant sum, and is the strongest conviction of the utility of this expedition, which, with all its numerous disadvantages, did yet prove so extremely prejudicial to the enemy.

SECTION XXXI.

Transactions in the River of Canton.

THE commodore, having taken pilots on board, proceeded with his prize for the river of Canton; and on the 14th of July, came to an anchor short of the Bocca Tigris, which is a narrow passage forming the mouth of that river: This entrance he proposed to stand through the next day, and to run up as far as Tiger island, which is a very safe road, secured from all winds. But whilst the Centurion and her prize were thus at anchor, a boat with an officer came off from the mandarine, commanding the forts at Bocca Tigris, to examine what the ships were, and whence they came. Mr Anson informed the officer, that his ship was a ship of war, belonging to the king of Great Britain; and that the other in company with him was a prize he had taken; that he was going into Canton river to shelter himself against the hurricanes which were then coming on; and that as soon as the monsoon shifted, he should proceed for England. The officer then desired an account of what men, guns, and ammunition were on board, a list of all which he said was to be sent to the government of Canton. But when these articles were repeated to him, particularly when he was told that there were in the Centurion four hundred firelocks, and between three and four hundred barrels of powder, he shrugged up his shoulders, and seemed to be terrified with the bare recital, saying, that no ships ever came into Canton river armed in that manner; adding, that he durst not set down the whole of this force, lest it should too much alarm the regency. After he had finished his enquiries, and was preparing to depart, he desired to leave the two custom-house officers behind him; on which the commodore told him, that though as a man of war he was prohibited

hibited from trading, and had nothing to do with customs or duties of any kind, yet, for the satisfaction of the Chinese, he would permit two of their people to be left on board, who might themselves be witnesses how punctually he should comply with his instructions. The officer seemed amazed when Mr Anson mentioned being exempted from all duties, and told him, that the emperor's duty must be paid by all ships that came into his ports: And it is supposed, that on this occasion, private directions were given by him to the Chinese pilot, not to carry the commodore through the Bocca Tigris; which makes it necessary more particularly to describe that entrance.

The Bocca Tigris is a narrow passage, little more than musquet-shot over, formed by two points of land, on each of which there is a fort, that on the starboard-side being a battery on the water's edge, with eighteen embrasures, but where there were no more than twelve iron cannon mounted, seeming to be four or six pounders; the fort on the larboard-side is a large castle, resembling those old buildings which here in England we often find distinguished by that name; it is situated on a high rock, and did not appear to be furnished with more than eight or ten cannon, none of which were supposed to exceed six pounders. These are the defences which secure the river of Canton; and which the Chinese (extremely defective in all military skill) have imagined were sufficient to prevent any enemy from forcing his way through.

But it is obvious, from the description of these forts, that they could have given no obstruction to Mr Anson's passage, even if they had been well supplied with gunners and stores; and therefore, though the pilot, after the Chinese officer had been on board, refused at first to take charge of the ship, till he had leave from the forts, yet as it was necessary to get through without any delay, for fear of the bad weather which was hourly expected, the commodore weighed on the 15th, and ordered the pilot to carry him by the forts, threatening him that, if the ship ran aground, he would instantly hang him up at the yard-arm. The pilot, awed by these threats, carried the ship through safely, the forts not attempting to dispute the passage. Indeed the poor pilot did not escape the resentment of his countrymen, for when he came on shore, he was seized and sent to prison, and was rigorously disciplined with the bamboo.

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However, he found means to get at Mr Anson afterwards, to desire of him some recompence for the chastisement he had undergone, and of which he then carried very significant marks about him; and Mr Anson, in commiseration of his sufferings, gave him such a sum of money, as would at any time have enticed a Chinese to have undergone a dozen bastinadoings.

Nor was the pilot the only person that suffered on this occasion; for the commodore soon after seeing some royal junks pass by him from Bocca Tigris towards Canton, he learnt, on enquiry, that the mandarine commanding the forts was a prisoner on board them; that he was already turned out, and was now carrying to Canton, where it was expected he would be severely punished for having permitted the ships to pass; and the commodore urging the unreasonableness of this procedure, from the inability of the forts to have done otherwise, explaining to the Chinese the great superiority his ships would have had over the forts, by the number and size of their guns, the Chinese seemed to acquiesce in his reasoning, and allowed that their forts could not have stopped him; but they still asserted, that the mandarine would infallibly suffer, for not having done what all his judges were convinced was impossible. To such indefensible absurdities are those obliged to submit who think themselves concerned to support their authority, when the necessary force is wanting.

On the 16th of July the commodore sent his second lieutenant to Canton, with a letter to the viceroy, informing him of the reason of the Centurion's putting into that port; and that the commodore himself soon proposed to repair to Canton, to pay a visit to the viceroy. The lieutenant was very civilly received, and was promised that an answer should be sent to the commodore the next day. In the mean time Mr Anson gave leave to several of the officers of the galleon to go to Canton, they engaging their parole to return in two days. When these prisoners got to Canton, the regency sent for them, and examined them, enquiring particularly by what means they had fallen into Mr Anson's power. And on this occasion the prisoners were honest enough to declare, that as the kings of Great Britain and of Spain were at war, they had proposed to themselves the taking of the Centurion, and had bore down upon her with that view, but that the event had been contrary to their hopes. However, they

they acknowledged that they had been treated by the commodore, much better than they believed they should have treated him, had he fallen into their hands. This confession from an enemy had great weight with the Chinese, who, till then, though they had revered the commodore's power, had yet suspected his morals, and had considered him rather as a lawless freebooter, than as one commissioned by the state for the revenge of public injuries. But they now changed their opinion, and regarded him as a more important person; to which perhaps the vast treasure of his prize might not a little contribute; the acquisition of wealth being a matter greatly adapted to the estimation and reverence of the Chinese nation.

In this examination of the Spanish prisoners, though the Chinese had no reason in the main to doubt of the account which was given them, yet there were two circumstances which appeared to them so singular, as to deserve a more ample explanation; one of them was the great disproportion of men between the Centurion and the galleon; the other was the humanity with which the people of the galleon were treated after they were taken. The mandarines therefore asked the Spaniards, how they came to be overpowered by so inferior a force; and how it happened, since the two nations were at war, that they were not put to death when they came into the hands of the English. To the first of these enquiries the Spaniards replied, that though they had more hands than the Centurion, yet she being intended solely for war, had a great superiority in the size of her guns, and in many other articles, over the galleon, which was a vessel fitted out principally for traffic: And as to the second question, they told the Chinese, that amongst the nations of Europe, it was not customary to put to death those who submitted; though they readily owned, that the commodore, from the natural bias of his temper, had treated both them and their countrymen, who had formerly been in his power, with very unusual courtesy, much beyond what they could have expected; or than was required by the customs established between nations at war with each other. These replies fully satisfied the Chinese, and at the same time wrought very powerfully in the commodore's favour.

On the 20th of July, in the morning, three mandarines, with a great number of boats, and a vast retinue, came on board the Centurion, and delivered to the commodore the viceroy

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viceroy of Canton's order for a daily supply of provisions, and for pilots to carry the ships up the river as far as the second bar; and at the same time they delivered him a message from the viceroy, in answer to the letter sent to Canton. The substance of the message was, that the viceroy desired to be excused from receiving the commodore's visit, during the then excessive hot weather; because the assembling the mandarines and soldiers, necessary to that ceremony, would prove extremely inconvenient and fatiguing; but that in September, when the weather would be more temperate, he should be glad to see both the commodore himself, and the English captain of the other ship, that was with him. As Mr Anson knew that an express had been dispatched to the court at Pekin, with an account of the Centurion and her prize being arrived in the river of Canton, he had no doubt, but the principal motive for putting off this visit was, that the regency at Canton might gain time to receive the emperor's instructions, about their behaviour on this unusual affair.

When the mandarines had delivered their message, they began to talk to the commodore about the duties to be paid by his ships; but he immediately told them, that he would never submit to any demand of that kind; that as he neither brought any merchandise thither, nor intended to carry any away, he could not be reasonably deemed to be within the meaning of the emperor's orders, which were doubtless calculated for trading vessels only, adding, that no duties were ever demanded of men of war, by nations accustomed to their reception, and that his master's orders expressly forbade him from paying any acknowledgement for his ships anchoring in any port whatever.

The mandarines being thus cut short on the subject of the duty, they said they had another matter to mention, which was the only remaining one they had in charge; this was a request to the commodore, that he would release the prisoners he had taken on board the galleon; for that the viceroy of Canton apprehended the emperor, his master, might be displeased, if he should be informed, that persons, who were his allies, and carried on a great commerce with his subjects, were under confinement in his dominions. Mr Anson was himself extremely desirous to get rid of the Spaniards, having, on his first arrival, sent about an hundred of them to Macao, and those who remained, near four hundred more,

more, were, on many accounts, a great incumbrance to him. However, to enhance the favour, he at first raised some difficulties; but permitting himself to be prevailed on, he at last told the mandarines, that to show his readiness to oblige the viceroy, he would release the prisoners, whenever they, the Chinese, would send boats to fetch them off. This matter being thus adjusted, the mandarines departed; and, on the 28th of July, two Chinese junks were sent from Canton, to take on board the prisoners, and to carry them to Macao. And the commodore, agreeable to his promise, dismissed them all, and ordered his purser to send with them eight days provision for their subsistence, during their sailing down the river; this being dispatched, the *Centurion* and her prize came to her moorings, above the second bar, where they proposed to continue till the monsoon shifted.

Though the ships, in consequence of the viceroy's permit, found no difficulty in purchasing provisions for their daily consumption, yet it was impossible for the commodore to proceed to England, without laying in a large quantity both of provisions and stores for his use, during the voyage: The procuring this supply was attended with much embarrassment; for there were people at Canton who had undertaken to furnish him with biscuit, and whatever else he wanted; and his linguist, towards the middle of September, had assured him, from day to day, that all was ready, and would be sent on board him immediately. But a fortnight being elapsed, and nothing being brought, the commodore sent to Canton to enquire more particularly into the reasons of this disappointment: And he had soon the vexation to be informed, that the whole was an illusion: that no order had been procured from the viceroy to furnish him with sea-stores, as had been pretended; that there was no biscuit baked, nor any one of the articles in readiness which had been promised him; nor did it appear, that the contractors had taken the least step to comply with their agreement. This was most disagreeable news, and made it suspected, that the furnishing the *Centurion* for her return to Great Britain might prove a more troublesome matter than had been hitherto imagined; especially too, as the month of September was nearly elapsed, without Mr Anson's having received any message from the viceroy of Canton.

And here perhaps it might be expected that some satisfactory

factory account should be given of the motives of the Chinese for this faithless procedure. But as I have already, in a former chapter, made some kind of conjectures about a similar event, I shall not repeat them again in this place, but shall observe, that after all, it may perhaps be impossible for an European, ignorant of the customs and manners of that nation, to be fully apprised of the real incitements to this behaviour. Indeed, thus much may undoubtedly be asserted, that in artifice, falsehood, and an attachment to all kinds of lucre, many of the Chinese are difficult to be paralleled by any other people; but then the combination of these talents, and the manner in which they are applied in particular emergencies, are often beyond the reach of a foreigner's penetration: So that though it may be safely concluded, that the Chinese had some interest in thus amusing the commodore, yet it may not be easy to assign the individual views by which they were influenced. And that I may not be thought too severe in ascribing to this nation a fraudulent and selfish turn of temper, so contradictory to the character given of them in the legendary accounts of the Roman missionaries, I shall here mention an extraordinary transaction or two, which I hope will be some kind of confirmation of what I have advanced.

When the commodore lay first at Macao, one of his officers, who had been extremely ill, desired leave of him to go on shore every day on a neighbouring island, imagining that a walk upon the land would contribute greatly to the restoring of his health: The commodore would have dissuaded him, suspecting the tricks of the Chinese, but the officer continuing importunate, in the end the boat was ordered to carry him. The first day he was put on shore he took his exercise, and returned without receiving any molestation, or even seeing any of the inhabitants; but the second day, he was assaulted, soon after his arrival, by a great number of Chinese who had been hoeing rice in the neighbourhood, and who beat him so violently with the handles of their hoes, that they soon laid him on the ground incapable of resistance; after which they robbed him, taking from him his sword, the hilt of which was silver, his money, his watch, gold-headed cane, snuff-box, sleeve-buttons, and hat, with several other trinkets: In the mean time the boat's crew, who were at some little distance, and had no arms of any kind with them, were incapable of giving

ing him any assistance; till at last one of them flew on the fellow who had the sword in his possession, and wresting it out of his hands, drew it, and with it was preparing to fall on the Chinese, some of whom he could not have failed of killing; but the officer, perceiving what he was about, immediately ordered him to desist, thinking it more prudent to submit to the present violence, than to embroil his commodore in an inextricable squabble with the Chinese government by the death of their subjects; which calmness in this gentleman was the more meritorious, as he was known to be a person of an uncommon spirit, and of a somewhat hasty temper: By this means the Chinese recovered the possession of the sword, which they soon perceived was prohibited to be made use of against them, and carried off their whole booty unmolested. No sooner were they gone, than a Chinese on horseback, very well dressed, and who had the air and appearance of a gentleman, came down to the shore, and, as far as could be understood by his signs, seemed to censure the conduct of his countrymen, and to commiserate the officer, being wonderfully officious to assist in getting him on board the boat: But notwithstanding this behaviour, it was shrewdly suspected that he was an accomplice in the theft, and time fully evinced the justice of those suspicions.

When the boat returned on board, and reported what had passed to the commodore, he immediately complained of it to the mandarine, who attended to see his ship supplied; but the mandarine coolly replied, that the boat ought not to have gone on shore, promising, however, that if the thieves could be found out, they should be punished; though it appeared plain enough, by his manner of answering, that he would never give himself any trouble in searching them out. However, a considerable time afterwards, when some Chinese boats were selling provisions to the Centurion, the person who had wrested the sword from the Chinese came with great eagerness to the commodore, to assure him that one of the principal thieves was then in a provision-boat alongside the ship; and the officer, who had been robbed, viewing the fellow on this report, and well remembering his face, orders were immediately given to seize him; and he was accordingly secured on board the ship, where strange discoveries were now made.

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fright in his countenance, that it was feared he would have died upon the spot; the mandarine too, who attended the ship, had visibly no small share of concern on the occasion. Indeed he had reason enough to be alarmed, since it was soon evinced that he had been privy to the whole robbery, for the commodore, declaring that he would not deliver up the thief, but would himself order him to be shot, the mandarine immediately put off the magisterial air with which he had at first pretended to demand him, and begged his release in the most abject manner; and the commodore appearing inflexible, there came on board, in less than two hours time, five or six of the neighbouring mandarines, who all joined in the same entreaty, and, with a view of facilitating their suit, offered a large sum of money for the fellow's liberty. Whilst they were thus soliciting, it was discovered that the mandarine, who was the most active amongst them, and who seemed to be most interested in the event, was the very gentleman who came to the officer just after the robbery, and who pretended to be so much displeased with the villainy of his countrymen. And, on further enquiry, it was found that he was the mandarine of the island; and that he had, by the authority of his office, ordered the peasants to commit that infamous action: And it seemed, as far as could be collected from the broken hints which were casually thrown out, that he and his brethren, who were all privy to the transaction, were terrified with the fear of being called before the tribunal at Canton, where the first article of their punishment would be the stripping them of all they were worth; though their judges (however fond of inflicting a chastisement so lucrative to themselves) were perhaps of as tainted a complexion as the delinquents. Mr Anson was not displeased to have caught the Chinese in this dilemma; and he entertained himself for some time with their perplexity, rejecting their money with scorn, appearing inexorable to their prayers, and giving out that the thief should certainly be shot; but as he then foresaw that he should be forced to take shelter in their ports a second time, when the influence he might hereby acquire over the magistrates would be of great service to him, he at length permitted himself to be persuaded, and, as a favour, released his prisoner, but not till the mandarine had collected and returned all that had been stolen from the officer, even to the minutest trifle.

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But, notwithstanding this instance of the good intelligence between the magistrates and criminals, the strong inclination of the Chinese to lucre often prompts them to break through this awful confederacy, and puts them on defrauding the authority that protects them, of its proper quota of the pillage. For not long after the above-mentioned transaction, (the former mandarine attendant on the ship, being, in the mean time, relieved by another,) the commodore lost a top-mast from his stern, which, after the most diligent enquiry, could not be traced : As it was not his own, but had been borrowed at Macao to heave down by, and was not to be replaced in that part of the world, he was extremely desirous to recover it, and published a considerable reward to any who would bring it him again. There were suspicions from the first of its being stolen, which made him conclude a reward was the likeliest method of getting it back : Accordingly, soon after, the mandarine told him that some of his, the mandarine's people, had found the top-mast, desiring the commodore to send his boats to fetch it, which being done, the mandarine's people received the promised reward ; but the commodore told the mandarine that he would make him a present besides for the care he had taken in directing it to be searched for, and, accordingly, Mr Anson gave a sum of money to his linguist, to be delivered to the mandarine ; but the linguist knowing that the people had been paid, and ignorant that a further present had been promised, kept the money himself : However, the mandarine fully confiding in Mr Anson's word, and suspecting the linguist, took occasion one morning to admire the size of the Centurion's masts, and thence, on a pretended sudden recollection, he made a digression to the top-mast which had been lost, and asked Mr Anson if he had not got it again. Mr Anson presently perceived the bent of this conversation, and enquired of him if he had not received the money from the linguist, and finding he had not, he offered to pay it him upon the spot. But this the mandarine refused, having now somewhat more in view than the sum which had been detained ; for the next day the linguist was seized, and was doubtless mulcted of all he had gotten in the commodore's service, which was supposed to be little less than two thousand dollars ; he was, besides, so severely bastinadoed with the bamboo, that it was with difficulty he escaped with life ; and when he was upbraided by the commodore

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modore (to whom he afterwards came begging) with his folly in risking all he had suffered for fifty dollars (the present intended for the mandarine,) he had no other excuse to make than the strong bias of his nation to dishonesty, replying, in his broken jargon, "Chinese man very great rogue truly, but have fashion, no can help."

It were endless to recount all the artifices, extortions, and frauds which were practised on the commodore and his people, by this interested race. The method of buying all things in China being by weight, the tricks made use of by the Chinese to increase the weight of the provision they sold to the Centurion, were almost incredible. One time a large quantity of fowls and ducks being bought for the ship's use, the greatest part of them presently died. This alarmed the people on board with the apprehensions that they had been killed by poison, but, on examination, it appeared that it was only owing to their being crammed with stones and gravel to increase their weight, the quantity thus forced into most of the ducks being found to amount to ten ounces in each. The hogs, too, which were bought ready killed of the Chinese butchers, had water injected into them for the same purpose; so that a carcass, hung up all night for the water to drain from it, hath lost above a stone of its weight; and when, to avoid this cheat, the hogs were bought alive, it was found that the Chinese gave them salt to increase their thirst, and having by this means excited them to drink great quantities of water, they then took measures to prevent them from discharging it again by urine, and sold the tortured animal in this inflated state. When the commodore first put to sea from Macao, they practised an artifice of another kind; for as the Chinese never object to the eating of any food that dies of itself, they took care, by some secret practices, that great part of his live sea-store should die in a short time after it was put on board, hoping to make a second profit of the dead carcasses, which they expected would be thrown overboard; and two-thirds of the hogs dying before the Centurion was out of sight of land, many of the Chinese boats followed her, only to pick up the car- rion. These instances may serve as a specimen of the man- ners of this celebrated nation, which is often recommended to the rest of the world as a pattern of all kinds of laudable qualities.

The commodore, towards the end of September, having found

found out (as has been said) that those who had contracted to supply him with sea-provisions and stores had deceived him, and that the viceroy had not sent to him according to his promise, saw it would be impossible for him to surmount the embarrassment he was under, without going himself to Canton and visiting the viceroy; and, therefore, on the 27th of September, he sent a message to the mandarine who attended the *Centurion*, to inform him that he, the commodore, intended, on the 1st of October, to proceed in his boat to Canton, adding, that the day after he got there he should notify his arrival to the viceroy, and should desire him to fix a time for his audience; to which the mandarine returned no other answer, than that he would acquaint the viceroy with the commodore's intentions. In the mean time all things were prepared for this expedition; and the boat's crew in particular, which Mr Anson proposed to take with him, were clothed in an uniform dress, resembling that of the watermen on the Thames; they were in number eighteen and a coxswain; they had scarlet jackets and blue silk waistcoats, the whole trimmed with silver buttons, and with silver badges on their jackets and caps. As it was apprehended, and even asserted, that the payment of the customary duties for the *Centurion* and her prize would be demanded by the regency of Canton, and would be insisted on previous to the granting a permission for victualing the ship for her future voyage, the commodore, who was resolved never to establish so dishonourable a precedent, took all possible precaution to prevent the Chinese from facilitating the success of their unreasonable pretensions, by having him in their power at Canton; and, therefore, for the security of his ship, and the great treasure on board her, he appointed his first lieutenant, Mr Brett, to be captain of the *Centurion* under him, giving him proper instructions for his conduct; directing him, particularly, if he, the commodore, should be detained at Canton on account of the duties in dispute, to take out the men from the *Centurion's* prize, and to destroy her; and then to proceed down the river through the Bocca Tigris with the *Centurion* alone, and to remain without that entrance till he received further orders from Mr Anson.

These necessary steps being taken, which were not unknown to the Chinese, it should seem as if their deliberations were in some sort embarrassed thereby. It is reasonable

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able to imagine, that they were in general very desirous of getting the duties to be paid them, not perhaps solely in consideration of the amount of those dues, but to keep up their reputation for address and subtlety, and to avoid the imputation of receding from claims on which they had already so frequently insisted: However, as they now foresaw that they had no other method of succeeding than by violence, and that even against this the commodore was prepared, they were at last disposed, I conceive, to let the affair drop, rather than entangle themselves in an hostile measure, which they found would only expose them to the risk of having the whole navigation of their port destroyed, without any certain prospect of gaining their favourite point.

However, though there is reason to imagine that these were their thoughts at that time, yet they could not depart at once from the evasive conduct to which they had hitherto adhered. For when the commodore, on the morning of the 1st of October, was preparing to set out for Canton, his linguist came to him from the mandarine, who attended his ship, to tell him that a letter had been received from the viceroy of Canton, desiring the commodore to put off his going thither for two or three days: But in the afternoon of the same day another linguist came on board, who, with much seeming fright, told Mr Anson that the viceroy had expected him up that day, that the counsel was assembled, and the troops had been under arms to receive him; and that the viceroy was highly offended at the disappointment, and had sent the commodore's linguist to prison chained, supposing that the whole had been owing to the linguist's negligence. This plausible tale gave the commodore great concern, and made him apprehend that there was some treachery designed him, which he could not yet fathom; and though it afterwards appeared that the whole was a fiction, not one article of it having the least foundation, yet (for reasons best known to themselves) this falsehood was so well supported by the artifices of the Chinese merchants at Canton, that, three days afterwards, the commodore received a letter, signed by all the supercargoes of the English ships then at that place, expressing their great uneasiness at what had happened, and intimating their fears that some insult would be offered to his boat, if he came thither before the viceroy was fully satisfied about the mistake. To

this letter Mr Anson replied, that he did not believe there had been any mistake, but was persuaded it was a forgery of the Chinese to prevent his visiting the viceroy; that, therefore, he would certainly come up to Canton on the 15th of October, confident that the Chinese would not dare to offer him an insult, as well knowing it would be properly returned.

On the 15th of October, the commodore continuing firm to his resolution, all the supercargoes of the English, Danish, and Swedish ships, came on board the *Centurion*, to accompany him to Canton, for which place he set out in his barge the same day, attended by his own boats, and by those of the trading ships, which, on this occasion, came to form his retinue; and, as he passed by Whampoa, where the European vessels lay, he was saluted by all of them but the French, and in the evening arrived safely at Canton.

SECTION XXXII.

Proceedings at the City of Canton, and the Return of the Centurion to England.

WHEN the commodore arrived at Canton, he was visited by the principal Chinese merchants, who affected to appear very much pleased that he had met with no obstruction in getting thither, and who thence pretended to conclude that the viceroy was satisfied about the former mistake, the reality of which they still insisted on; they added, that as soon as the viceroy should be informed that Mr Anson was at Canton (which they promised should be done the next morning,) they were persuaded a day would be immediately appointed for the visit, which was the principal business that had brought the commodore thither.

The next day the merchants returned to Mr Anson, and told him that the viceroy was then so fully employed in preparing his dispatches for Pekin, that there was no getting admittance to him for some days, but that they had engaged one of the officers of his court to give them information as soon as he should be at leisure, when they proposed to notify Mr Anson's arrival, and to endeavour to fix the day of audience. The commodore was by this time too well acquainted with their artifices not to perceive that this was a falsehood;

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a falsehood; and had he consulted only his own judgment, he would have applied directly to the viceroy by other hands: But the Chinese merchants had so far prepossessed the supercargoes of our ships with chimerical fears, that they were extremely apprehensive of being embroiled with the government, and of suffering in their interest, if those measures were taken, which appeared to Mr Anson at that time to be the most prudent; and, therefore, lest the malice and double-dealing of the Chinese might have given rise to some sinister incident, which would be afterwards charged on him, he resolved to continue passive as long as it should appear that he lost no time by thus suspending his own opinion. With this view, he promised not to take any immediate step for getting admittance to the viceroy, provided the Chinese with whom he contracted for provisions would let him see that his bread was baked, his meat salted, and his stores prepared with the utmost dispatch; but if by the time when all was in readiness to be shipped off (which it was supposed would be in about forty days,) the merchants should not have procured the viceroy's permission, then the commodore proposed to apply for himself. These were the terms Mr Anson thought proper to offer, to quiet the uneasiness of the supercargoes, and, notwithstanding the apparent equity of the conditions, many difficulties and objections were urged; nor would the Chinese agree to them till the commodore had consented to pay for every article he bespoke before it was put in hand. However, at last, the contract being past, it was some satisfaction to the commodore to be certain that his preparations were now going on, and being himself on the spot, he took care to hasten them as much as possible.

During this interval, in which the stores and provisions were getting ready, the merchants continually entertained Mr Anson with accounts of their various endeavours to get a license from the viceroy, and their frequent disappointments, which to him was now a matter of amusement, as he was fully satisfied there was not one word of truth in any thing they said. But when all was completed, and wanted only to be shipped, which was about the 24th of November, at which time too the N.E. monsoon was set in, he then resolved to apply himself to the viceroy to demand an audience, as he was persuaded that, without this ceremony, the procuring a permission to send his stores on board would

meet with great difficulty. On the 24th of November, therefore, Mr Anson sent one of his officers to the mandarine, who commanded the guard of the principal gate of the city of Canton, with a letter directed to the viceroy. When this letter was delivered to the mandarine, he received the officer who brought it very civilly, and took down the contents of it in Chinese, and promised that the viceroy should be immediately acquainted with it; but told the officer it was not necessary for him to wait for an answer, because a message would be sent to the commodore himself.

On this occasion Mr Anson had been under great difficulties about a proper interpreter to send with his officer, as he was well aware that none of the Chinese, usually employed as linguists, could be relied on: But he at last prevailed with Mr Flint, an English gentleman belonging to the factory, who spoke Chinese perfectly well, to accompany his officer. This person, who upon this occasion and many others was of singular service to the commodore, had been left at Canton when a youth, by the late Captain Rigby. The leaving him there to learn the Chinese language was a step taken by that captain, merely from his own persuasion of the great advantages which the East-India company might one day receive from an English interpreter; and though the utility of this measure has greatly exceeded all that was expected from it, yet I have not heard that it has been to this day imitated: But we imprudently choose (except in this single instance) to carry on the vast transactions of the port of Canton, either by the ridiculous jargon of broken English, which some few of the Chinese have learnt, or by the suspected interpretation of the linguists of other nations.

Two days after the sending the above-mentioned letter, a fire broke out in the suburbs of Canton. On the first alarm, Mr Anson went thither with his officers, and his boat's crew, to assist the Chinese. When he came there, he found that it had begun in a sailor's shed, and that by the slightness of the buildings, and the awkwardness of the Chinese, it was getting head apace: But he perceived, that by pulling down some of the adjacent sheds it might easily be extinguished; and particularly observing that it was running along

¹ The practice recommended, it is almost unnecessary to remark, has been adopted since our author's time, but certainly not to the extent the probable advantages of it would suggest.—E.

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along a wooden cornish, which would soon communicate it to a great distance, he ordered his people to begin with tearing away that cornish; this was presently attempted, and would have been soon executed; but, in the meantime, he was told, that, as there was no mandarine there to direct what was to be done, the Chinese would make him, the commodore, answerable for whatever should be pulled down by his orders. On this his people desisted; and he sent them to the English factory, to assist in securing the company's treasure and effects, as it was easy to foresee that no distance was a protection against the rage of such a fire, where so little was done to put a stop to it; for all this time the Chinese contented themselves with viewing it, and now and then holding one of their idols near it, which they seemed to expect should check its progress: However, at last, a mandarine came out of the city, attended by four or five hundred firemen: These made some feeble efforts to pull down the neighbouring houses; but by this time the fire had greatly extended itself, and was got amongst the merchants' warehouses; and the Chinese firemen, wanting both skill and spirit, were incapable of checking its violence; so that its fury increased upon them, and it was feared the whole city would be destroyed. In this general confusion the viceroy himself came thither, and the commodore was sent to, and was entreated to afford his assistance, being told that he might take any measures he should think most prudent in the present emergency. And now he went thither a second time, carrying with him about forty of his people; who, upon this occasion, exerted themselves in such a manner, as in that country was altogether without example: For they were rather animated than deterred by the flames and falling buildings, amongst which they wrought; so that it was not uncommon to see the most forward of them tumble to the ground on the roofs, and amidst the ruins of houses, which their own efforts brought down with them. By their boldness and activity the fire was soon extinguished, to the amazement of the Chinese; and the building being all on one floor, and the materials slight, the seamen, notwithstanding their daring behaviour, happily escaped with no other injuries, than some considerable bruises.

The fire, though at last thus luckily extinguished, did great mischief during the time it continued; for it consumed

mod an hundred shops and eleven streets full of warehouses, so that the damage amounted to an immense sum; and one of the Chinese merchants, well known to the English, whose name was Succoy, was supposed, for his own share, to have lost near two hundred thousand pounds sterling. It raged indeed with unusual violence, for in many of the warehouses, there were large quantities of camphor, which greatly added to its fury, and produced a column of exceeding white flame, which shot up into the air to such a prodigious height, that it was plainly seen on board the *Centurion*, though she was thirty miles distant.

Whilst the commodore and his people were labouring at the fire, and the terror of its becoming general still possessed the whole city, several of the most considerable Chinese merchants came to Mr Anson, to desire that he would let each of them have one of his soldiers (for such they styled his boat's crew from the uniformity of their dress) to guard their warehouses and dwelling-houses, which, from the known dishonesty of the populace, they feared would be pillaged in the tumult. Mr Anson granted them this request; and all the men that he thus furnished to the Chinese behaved greatly to the satisfaction of their employers, who afterwards highly applauded their great diligence and fidelity.

By this means, the resolution of the English at the fire, and their trustiness and punctuality elsewhere, was the general subject of conversation amongst the Chinese. And, the next morning, many of the principal inhabitants waited on the commodore to thank him for his assistance; frankly owning to him, that they could never have extinguished the fire of themselves, and that he had saved their city from being totally consumed. And soon after a message came to the commodore from the viceroy, appointing the 30th of November for his audience; which sudden resolution of the viceroy, in a matter that had been so long agitated in vain, was also owing to the signal services performed by Mr Anson and his people at the fire, of which the viceroy himself had been in some measure an eye-witness.

The fixing this business of the audience, was, on all accounts, a circumstance which Mr Anson was much pleased with; as he was satisfied that the Chinese government would not have determined this point, without having agreed among themselves to give up their pretensions to the duties they

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they claimed, and to grant him all he could reasonably ask; for as they well knew the commodore's sentiments, it would have been a piece of imprudence, not consistent with the refined cunning of the Chinese, to have admitted him to an audience, only to have contested with him. And therefore, being himself perfectly easy about the result of his visit, he made all necessary preparations against the day. Mr Flint, whom he engaged to act as interpreter in the conference, acquitted himself much to the commodore's satisfaction; repeating with great boldness, and doubtless with exactness, all that was given in charge, a part which no Chinese linguist would ever have performed with any tolerable fidelity.

At ten o'clock in the morning, on the day appointed, a mandarine came to the commodore, to let him know that the viceroy was ready to receive him; on which the commodore and his retinue immediately set out: And as soon as he entered the outer gate of the city, he found a guard of two hundred soldiers drawn up ready to attend him; these conducted him to the great parade before the emperor's palace, where the viceroy then resided. In this parade, a body of troops, to the number of ten thousand, were drawn up under arms, and made a very fine appearance, being all of them new clothed for this ceremony: And Mr Anson and his retinue having passed through the middle of them, he was then conducted to the great hall of audience, where he found the viceroy seated under a rich canopy in the emperor's chair of state, with all his council of mandarines attending: Here there was a vacant seat prepared for the commodore, in which he was placed on his arrival: He was ranked the third in order from the viceroy, there being above him only the head of the law, and of the treasury, who in the Chinese government take place of all military officers. When the commodore was seated, he addressed himself to the viceroy by his interpreter, and began with reciting the various methods he had formerly taken to get an audience; adding, that he imputed the delays he had met with to the insincerity of those he had employed, and that he had therefore no other means left, than to send, as he had done, his own officer with a letter to the gate. On the mention of this the viceroy stopped the interpreter, and bid him assure Mr Anson, that the first knowledge they had of his being at Canton, was from that letter. Mr Anson then proceeded, and told him, that the subjects of the king of

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Great Britain trading to China had complained to him, the commodore, of the vexatious impositions both of the merchants and inferior custom-house officers, to which they were frequently necessitated to submit, by reason of the difficulty of getting access to the mandarines, who alone could grant them redress: That it was his, Mr Anson's, duty, as an officer of the king of Great Britain, to lay before the viceroy these grievances of the British subjects, which he hoped the viceroy would take into consideration, and would give orders, that for the future there should be no just reason for complaint. Here Mr Anson paused, and waited some time in expectation of an answer; but nothing being said, he asked his interpreter if he was certain the viceroy understood what he had urged; the interpreter told him, he was certain it was understood, but he believed no reply would be made to it. Mr Anson then represented to the viceroy the case of the ship *Haslingfield*, which, having been dismasted on the coast of China, had arrived in the river of Canton but a few days before. The people on board this vessel had been great sufferers by the fire; the captain in particular had all his goods burnt, and had lost besides, in the confusion, a chest of treasure of four thousand five hundred taels, which was supposed to be stolen by the Chinese boat-men. Mr Anson therefore desired that the captain might have the assistance of the government, as it was apprehended the money could never be recovered without the interposition of the mandarines. And to this request the viceroy made answer, that in settling the emperor's customs for that ship, some abatement should be made in consideration of her losses.

And now the commodore having dispatched the business with which the officers of the East-India company had entrusted him, he entered on his own affairs; acquainting the viceroy, that the proper season was now set in for returning to Europe; and that he waited only for a licence to ship off his provisions and stores, which were all ready; and that as soon as this should be granted him, and he should have gotten his necessaries on board, he intended to leave the river of Canton, and to make the best of his way for England. The viceroy replied to this, that the licence should be immediately issued, and that every thing should be ordered on board the following day. And finding that Mr Anson had nothing farther to insist on, the viceroy continued the conversation.

conversation for some time, acknowledging in very civil terms how much the Chinese were obliged to him for his signal services at the fire, and owning that he had saved the city from being destroyed: And then observing that the Centurion had been a good while on their coast, he closed his discourse, by wishing the commodore a good voyage to Europe. After which, the commodore, thanking him for his civility and assistance, took his leave.

As soon as the commodore was out of the hall of audience, he was much pressed to go into a neighbouring apartment, where there was an entertainment provided; but finding, on enquiry, that the viceroy himself was not to be present, he declined the invitation, and departed, attended in the same manner as at his arrival; only at his leaving the city he was saluted by three guns, which are as many as in that country are ever fired on any ceremony. Thus the commodore, to his great joy, at last finished this troublesome affair, which, for the preceding four months, had given him great disquietude. Indeed he was highly pleased with procuring a licence for the shipping of his stores and provisions; for thereby he was enabled to return to Great Britain with the first of the monsoon, and to prevent all intelligence of his being expected: But this, though a very important point, was not the circumstance which gave him the greatest satisfaction; for he was more particularly attentive to the authentic precedent established on this occasion, by which his majesty's ships of war are for the future exempted from all demands of duty in any of the ports of China.

In pursuance of the promises of the viceroy, the provisions were begun to be sent on board the day after the audience; and, four days after, the commodore embarked at Canton for the Centurion; and on the 7th of December, the Centurion and her prize unmoored, and stood down the river, passing through the Bocca Tigris on the 10th. And on this occasion I must observe, that the Chinese had taken care to man the two forts, on each side of that passage, with as many men as they could well contain, the greatest part of them armed with pikes and match-lock muskets. These garrisons affected to shew themselves as much as possible to the ships, and were doubtless intended to induce Mr Anson to think more reverently than he had hitherto done of the Chinese military power: For this purpose they were equipped with much parade, having a great number of colours exposed

exposed to view; and on the castle in particular there were laid considerable heaps of large stones; and a soldier of unusual size, dressed in very sightly armour, stalked about on the parapet with a battle-axe in his hand, endeavouring to put on as important and martial an air as possible; though some of the observers on board the Centurion shrewdly suspected, from the appearance of his armour, that instead of steel, it was composed only of a particular kind of glittering paper.

The Centurion and her prize being now without the river of Canton, and consequently upon the point of leaving the Chinese jurisdiction, I beg leave, before I quit all mention of the Chinese affairs, to subjoin a few remarks on the disposition and genius of that extraordinary people. And though it may be supposed, that observations made at Canton only, a place situated in the corner of the empire, are very imperfect materials on which to found any general conclusions, yet as those who have had opportunities of examining the inner parts of the country, have been evidently influenced by very ridiculous prepossession, and as the transactions of Mr. Anson with the regency of Canton were of an uncommon nature, in which many circumstances occurred, different perhaps from any which have happened before, I hope the following reflections, many of them drawn from these incidents, will not be altogether unacceptable to the reader.

That the Chinese are a very ingenious and industrious people, is sufficiently evinced, from the great number of curious manufactures which are established amongst them, and which are eagerly sought for by the most distant nations; but though skill in the handicraft arts seems to be the most important qualification of this people, yet their talents therein are but of a second-rate kind; for they are much out-done by the Japanese in those manufactures, which are common to both countries; and they are in numerous instances incapable of rivalling the mechanic dexterity of the Europeans. Indeed, their principal excellence seems to be imitation; and they accordingly labour under that poverty of genius, which constantly attends all servile imitations. This is most conspicuous in works which require great truth and accuracy; as in clocks, watches, fire-arms, &c. for in all these, though they can copy the different parts, and can form some resemblance of the whole, yet they

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they never could arrive at such a justness in their fabric, as was necessary to produce the desired effect. And if we pass from their manufactures to artists of a superior class, as painters, staturaries, &c., in these matters they seem to be still more defective, their painters, though very numerous and in great esteem, rarely succeeding in the drawing or colouring of human figures, or in the grouping of large compositions; and though in flowers and birds their performances are much more admired, yet even in these, some part of the merit is rather to be imputed to the native brightness and excellency of the colours, than to the skill of the painter; since it is very unusual to see the light and shade justly and naturally handled, or to find that ease and grace in the drawing, which are to be met with in the works of European artists. In short, there is a stiffness and minuteness in most of the Chinese productions, which are extremely displeasing: And it may perhaps be asserted with great truth, that these defects in their arts are entirely owing to the peculiar turn of the people, amongst whom nothing great or spirited is to be met with.

If we next examine the Chinese literature, (taking our accounts from the writers, who have endeavoured to represent it in the most favourable light) we shall find, that on this head their obstinacy and absurdity are most wonderful: For though, for many ages, they have been surrounded by nations, to whom the use of letters was familiar, yet they, the Chinese alone, have hitherto neglected to avail themselves of that almost divine invention, and have continued to adhere to the rude and inartificial method of representing words by arbitrary marks; a method, which necessarily renders the number of their characters too great for human memory to manage, makes writing to be an art that requires prodigious application, and in which no man can be otherwise than partially skilled; whilst all reading, and understanding of what is written, is attended with infinite obscurity and confusion; for the connection between these marks, and the words they represent, cannot be retained in books, but must be delivered down from age to age by oral tradition: And how uncertain this must prove in such a complicated subject, is sufficiently obvious to those who have attended to the variation which all verbal relations undergo, when they are transmitted through three or four hands only. Hence it is easy to conclude, that the history and

and inventions of past ages, recorded by these perplexed symbols, must frequently prove unintelligible; and consequently the learning and boasted antiquity of the nation must, in numerous instances, be extremely problematical.

But we are told by some of the missionaries, that though the skill of the Chinese in science is indeed much inferior to that of the Europeans, yet the morality and justice taught and practised by them are most exemplary. And from the description given by some of these good fathers, one should be induced to believe that the whole empire was a well-governed affectionate family, where the only contests were, who should exert the most humanity and beneficence: But our preceding relation of the behaviour of the magistrates, merchants, and tradesmen at Canton, sufficiently refutes these jesuitical fictions. And as to their theories of morality, if we may judge from the specimens exhibited in the works of the missionaries, we shall find them solely employed in recommending ridiculous attachments to certain immaterial points, instead of discussing the proper criterion of human actions, and regulating the general conduct of mankind to one another on reasonable and equitable principles. Indeed, the only pretension of the Chinese to a more refined morality than their neighbours is founded; not on their integrity or beneficence, but solely on the affected evenness of their demeanour, and their constant attention to suppress all symptoms of passion and violence. But it must be considered, that hypocrisy and fraud are often not less mischievous to the general interests of mankind, than impetuosity and vehemence of temper, since these, though usually liable to the imputation of imprudence, do not exclude sincerity, benevolence, resolution, nor many other laudable qualities. And perhaps if this matter were examined to the bottom, it would appear that the calm and patient turn of the Chinese, on which they so much value themselves, and which distinguishes the nation from all others, is in reality the source of the most exceptionable part of their character; for it has been often observed by those who have attended to the nature of mankind, that it is difficult to curb the more robust and violent passions, without augmenting at the same time the force of the selfish ones: So that the timidity, dissimulation, and dishonesty of the Chinese, may, in some sort, be owing to the

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Thus much for the general disposition of the people: But I cannot dismiss this subject without adding a few words about the Chinese government, that too having been the subject of boundless panegyric. And on this head I must observe, that the favourable accounts often given of their prudent regulations for the administration of their domestic affairs, are sufficiently confuted by their transactions with Mr Anson: For we have seen that their magistrates are corrupt, their people thievish, and their tribunals crafty and venal. Nor is the constitution of the empire, or the general orders of the state, less liable to exception: Since that form of government, which does not in the first place provide for the security of the public against the enterprises of foreign powers, is certainly a most defective institution: And yet this populous, this rich, and extensive country, so pompously celebrated for its refined wisdom and policy, was conquered about an age since by an handful of Tartars; and even now, by the cowardice of the inhabitants, and the want of proper military regulations, it continues exposed not only to the attempts of any potent state, but to the ravages of every petty invader. I have already observed, on occasion of the commodore's disputes with the Chinese, that the Centurion alone was an overmatch for all the naval power of that empire: This perhaps may appear an extraordinary position; but to render it unquestionable, one may refer to vessels made use of by the Chinese.^a The first of these is a junk of about a hundred and twenty tons burden, and was what the Centurion hove down by; these are most used in the great rivers, though they sometimes serve for small coasting voyages: The other junk is about two hundred and eighty tons burden, and is of the same form with those in which they trade to Cochinchina, Manilla, Batavia, and Japan, though some of their trading vessels are of a much larger size; its head is perfectly flat; and when the vessel is deep laden, the second or third plank of this flat surface is oft-times under water. The masts, sails, and rigging of these vessels are ruder than their built; for their masts are made of trees, no otherwise fashioned than by barking them, and lopping off their branches

^a The plate is necessarily omitted.

branches. Each mast has only two shrouds made of twisted rattan, which are often both shifted to the weather-side; and the halyard, when the yard is up, serves instead of a third shroud. The sails are made of mat, strengthened every three feet by an horizontal rib of bamboo; they run upon the mast with hoops, and when they are lowered down, they fold upon the deck. These merchantmen carry no cannon; and it appears, from this whole description, that they are utterly incapable of resisting any European armed vessel. Nor is the state provided with ships of considerable force, or of a better fabric, to protect them: For at Canton, where doubtless their principal naval power is stationed, we saw no more than four men of war junks, of about three hundred tons burden, being of the make already described, and mounted only with eight or ten guns, the largest of which does not exceed a four-pounder. This may suffice to give an idea of the defenceless state of the Chinese empire. But it is time to return to the commodore, whom I left with his two ships without the Bocca Tigris; and who, on the 12th of December, anchored before the town of Macao.

Whilst the ships lay here, the merchants of Macao finished their agreement for the galleon, for which they had offered 6000 dollars; this was much short of her value, but the impatience of the commodore to get to sea, to which the merchants were no strangers, prompted them to insist on so unequal a bargain. Mr. Anson had learnt enough from the English at Canton, to conjecture that the war between Great Britain and Spain was still continued; and that probably the French might engage in the assistance of Spain, before he could arrive in Great Britain; and therefore knowing, that no intelligence could get to Europe of the prize he had taken, and the treasure he had on board, till the return of the merchantmen from Canton, he was resolved to make all possible expedition in getting back, that he might be himself the first messenger of his own good fortune, and might thereby prevent the enemy from forming any projects to intercept him: For these reasons, he, to avoid all delay, accepted of the sum offered for the galleon; and she being delivered to the merchants the 15th of December, 1748, the *Centurion* the same day got under sail, on her return to England. And on the 3d of January, she came to an anchor at Prince's Island, in the straits of Sunda,

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Sunda, and continued there wooding and watering till the 8th, when she weighed and stood for the Cape of Good Hope, where, on the eleventh of March she anchored in Table-Bay.

Here the commodore continued till the beginning of April, highly delighted with the place, which, by its extraordinary accommodations, the healthiness of its air, and the picturesque appearance of the country, all enlivened by the addition of a civilized colony, was not disgraced in an imaginary comparison with the vallies of Juan Fernandez, and the lawns of Tinian. During his stay he entered about forty new men; and having by the 3d of April, 1744, completed his water and provision, he on that day weighed and put to sea; and on the 19th of the same month they saw the island of St Helena, which, however, they did not touch at, but stood on their way; and, on the 10th of June, being then in soundings, they spoke with an English ship from Amsterdam bound for Philadelphia, whence they received the first intelligence of a French war; the 12th they got sight of the Lizard; and the 15th, in the evening, to their infinite joy, they came safe to an anchor at Spithead. But that the signal perils which had so often threatened them in the preceding part of the enterprise, might pursue them to the very last, Mr Anson learnt on his arrival, that there was a French fleet of considerable force cruising in the chops of the channel, which, by the account of their position, he found the *Centurion* had run through, and had been all the time concealed by a fog. Thus was this expedition finished, when it had lasted three years and nine months; after having, by its event, strongly evinced this important truth, that though prudence, intrepidity, and perseverance united, are not exempted from the blows of adverse fortune; yet in a long series of transactions, they usually rise superior to its power, and in the end rarely fail of proving successful.

[In concluding the account of this very interesting circumnavigation, it is necessary to advert to a question of some importance in literature, as every question must be that involves the claims of authors and their respective titles to reputation. Nor is the public often impatient in listening to evidence on such subjects, if the merit contended for be sufficiently great to justify solicitude as to its being rightly

rightly conferred. That it is so in the case of the question, Who was the author of this work? no one can doubt, that is capable of relishing its excellencies; or is aware of the high rank it has always held among compositions of the kind—that its first reception was such as to take off four large impressions within a twelvemonth—that it has been repeatedly printed since in a variety of forms—and that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe. The claimants are Mr Walter, chaplain of the *Centurion*, under whose name (as is mentioned in this volume of the Collection, p. 201,) it was originally, and, so far as the editor knows, always published; and Mr Benjamin Robins, an ingenious mathematician, and author of several works, much esteemed by men of science. A short statement of such information as the editor has been able to procure, is all that the limits of this work will permit to be said on the subject of this question. The public, being interested in what had been generally reported through the medium of the periodical publications, respecting the proceedings and fate of the squadron under Commodore Anson, had eagerly expected some account of this voyage drawn up under his notice, or authenticated by his approval. This anxiety, it is likely, was not a little enhanced by the circumstance of several small, but curious enough, narratives having been published of the distresses experienced by part of the squadron, especially the *Wager*; from which it was naturally enough inferred, that a judicious and minute account of the whole could not fail to gratify rational curiosity, and the common disposition to wonder. Mr Walter, accordingly, who had gone in the *Centurion*, the commodore's vessel, as chaplain, and who, it seems, had been in the habit of keeping memorials of the transactions and occurrences of the squadron, prepared materials for publication, and actually procured subscriptions for the liquidation of its expense. He brought down his narrative to the time of his leaving the *Centurion* at Macao, when he returned by another conveyance to England. But as the public expectation had been raised very high, some persons, it would appear, suggested that the materials intended to be published should be carefully examined, and, if need be, corrected, by an adequate judge of literary and scientific composition. Mr Robins, already well known as an author of both mathematical and political essays, and much valued by several distinguished characters

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ters of the times, was engaged to undertake this task, whether with or without the desire of Mr Walter, or under any allegation of that gentleman's known or reputed incompetency to fulfil the hopes entertained, cannot now be discovered. On examination, we are told, it was resolved that Mr Robins should write the whole work anew, and merely use the materials furnished by Mr Walter, or otherwise, as the particulars of wind, weather, currents, courses, &c. &c. usually given in a sailor's journal. The introduction, and several dissertations interspersed through the work, are said, moreover, to have been written by Mr Robins without any such assistance whatever; but to what magnitude his labours throughout amounted, it is perhaps impossible to ascertain. That he acquired reputation by it is unquestionable; but that Mr Walter himself should not have contributed so much as to warrant his name appearing on the title-page of the book, and at its dedication to the Duke of Bedford, would require a proof of both want of talents and meanness of disposition, which no one yet has attempted to adduce. Mr Walter's character, indeed, seems to have been quite above either such deficiency; and, in all probability, was, both in point of firmness and moral and intellectual worth, the very circumstance which obtained for him the appointment to a responsible office in an expedition, which, in its origin, progress, and issue, attracted the peculiar regard of the British government, and the admiration of mankind in general. Besides this office, it may be mentioned, that in 1745, on his return from the expedition, he was made chaplain of Portsmouth dock-yard, in which situation he continued till his death on March 10th, 1785. The first edition of the work appeared in 1748; and a fifth being required in the following year, Mr Robins, it is said, revised it, and intended, had he remained in England, to have added a second volume. This rests on the assertion of Dr Wilson, who published Mr Robins' works after his death, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1761; and who, in the account of that gentleman's life prefixed, has been at pains to claim, in the strongest language, the merit of the Narrative for his friend. A passage or two from that memoir may satisfy the reader as to this part of the evidence, and as to the opinion of Dr W. one of the principal witnesses, respecting the proportional labours of Messrs Walter and Robins. "Upon a strict perusal of both the performances," says he, "I find Mr Robins' to contain

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about as much matter again as that of Mr Walter—so this famous Voyage was composed in the person of the Centurion's chaplain, by Mr Robins in his own style and manner. Of this Mr Robins' friends, Mr Glover and Mr Ockenden, are witnesses as well as myself, we having compared the printed book with Mr Walter's manuscript. And this was at that time no secret, for in the counterpart of an indenture, now lying before me, made between Benjamin Robins, Esq. and John and Paul Knapton, booksellers, I find that those booksellers purchased the copy of this book from Mr Robins, as the sole proprietor, with no other mention of Mr Walter than a proviso in relation to the subscriptions he had taken." Dr Wilson evidently writes under some conviction that his assertions are liable to scrutiny, and that the matter of his remarks is debatable; hence his allegation that other *friends* of Mr Robins are witnesses as well as himself, and his insinuation that what he testifies was no secret. But it is obvious, that, were his own assertions of the fact at all questionable, he would be equally obnoxious to discredit in assigning these other witnesses; for clearly, the man who could falsify in the one case, would be capable of doing so in the other. This may be said without any impeachment whatever of either Dr Wilson or the other friends of Mr Robins. It is merely a remark on the mode of proof which the Dr has adopted. As to the insinuation again, of the fact being no secret, all that it may be requisite to say is simply this, that the circumstance of the existence of the counterpart of such an indenture as is mentioned, is a very indifferent proof of publicity; and that even were it otherwise, were it "confirmation strong," still it might be readily conceived that Mr Robins should be the sole proprietor of the work, and yet in no degree the author of it. One may believe, at least, that Mr Robins, having aided in drawing up the materials for publication, and having furnished some pieces for it, was entrusted with the disposal of it to the booksellers; Mr Walter himself, for value received, or other considerations, abandoning all further concern. Some importance has been attached to a letter from Lord Anson to Mr Robins, as preserved by Dr Wilson, and published, as he says, by his lordship's permission, or, to use his own expression, "Printed not without the noble lord's consent; who," says the doctor, "being requested to permit that this testimony might be exhibited to the world of his lordship's esteem

esteem for Mr Robins, replied, in the politest manner, That every thing in his power was due to the memory of one who had deserved so well of the public." That Mr Robins deserved well of the public was unquestionable, though he had not written a line of the Narrative. He had published several works on subjects of general utility; and, besides his private instructions in beneficial science, he had been employed officially in the service of his country: In short, he needed not any thing of the reputation of the author of the Narrative, whoever he was, to extend his own. But does the letter referred to, or the quotation now given respecting Lord Anson's permission to publish it, in any degree determine the question, or any thing connected with it? The Editor has a different opinion of it; he thinks it quite irrelevant—that it does not yield the least shadow of proof, that Mr Robins had any thing to do with the volume of the Narrative, already given to the public. All that can be legitimately inferred from it amounts to this, that Lord Anson, entertaining a high opinion of Mr Robins, and being much pleased with his works, was desirous that he should publish a second volume of the Voyage, and apprehended that he had abandoned the intention of doing so. Of the fact of Mr Robins being the author of what had appeared, or even of the existence of materials for a second volume in a state fit for the public notice—of any thing, in short, but an intention on the part of Mr Robins to this effect, the letter in question says not a word. Let the reader judge for himself. The letter is as follows:—

"DEAR SIR,

"When I last saw you in town, I forgot to ask you, whether you intended to publish the second volume of my "Voyage" before you leave us; which, I confess, I am very sorry for. If you should have laid aside all thoughts of favouring the world with more of your works, it will be much disappointed, and no one in it more than your very much obliged and humble servant,

Bath, 22d October, 1749.

"ANSON."

"If you can tell the time of your departure, let me know it."

This letter is also preserved by Mr Nichols in his *Literary Anecdotes*

Anecdotes of the 18th Century, vol. ii. page 206, where the Narrative is explicitly ascribed to Mr Robins, but not on any particular evidence. The statement indeed that is there given seems founded on Dr Wilson's account of Mr Robins, without any other source of information having been consulted. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* is somewhat more candid, stating merely what was generally thought as to the Narrative being the work of Mr Robins, and at the same time pointing, though indirectly, to the existence of information opposed to that opinion. "In 1748," says the article Robins, 3d edition, "appeared Lord Anson's Voyage round the World, which, though Mr Walter's name is in the title, has been generally thought to be the work of Mr Robins."—"The 5th edition, printed at London, in 1749, was revised and corrected by Mr Robins himself. It appears, however, from the corrigenda and addenda to the 1st volume of the *Biographia Britannica*, printed in the beginning of the 4th volume of that work, that Mr Robins was only consulted with respect to the disposition of the drawings, and that he had left England before the book was printed. Whether this be the fact, as it is asserted to be by the widow of Mr Walter, it is not for us to determine." The remark now made seems somewhat ambiguous, and may refer to either the 5th edition only, or to the work in general. In reference, however, to the *Biog. Brit.* as above, the ambiguity is removed, and a testimony is discovered in opposition to the statement of Dr Wilson, which the reader cannot fail to consider of very high import, and as bearing strongly against the claims of Mr Robins. The writers of the *Biog.* had spoken, in their account of Lord Anson, of the history of his voyage having been written by Mr Robins. This they did on common though uncontradicted report, arising in all probability from the positive assertions of Dr Wilson, to which, it is certainly very singular, neither Mr Walter nor any of his friends chose to object. With the most praise-worthy liberality and candour, however, these gentlemen, in the corrigenda, &c. referred to, insert the following notice:—"Thus has the matter hitherto stood. But so late as the present year (1789) and a few days previously to the writing of this note, a letter upon the subject has been put into our hands by Mr John Walter, bookseller at Charing Cross. It is addressed to that gentleman by Mrs Walter, the widow of the publisher of that Voyage, and is as follows:

"SIR,

"SIR,

"I am informed that the *Biographia Britannica* insinuates that Mr Robins, and not Mr Walter, was the writer of Lord Anson's Voyage round the World. I shall therefore take it as a favour, if you will put me in the way of correcting so great a mistake. During the time of Mr Walter's writing that Voyage, he visited me almost daily previous to our marriage, and I have frequently heard him say how closely he had been engaged in writing for some hours to prepare for his constant attendance upon Lord Anson at six every morning for his approbation, as his lordship overlooked every sheet that was written. At some of those meetings Mr Robins assisted, as he was consulted in the disposition of the drawings; and I also know that Mr Robins left England (for he was sent to Bergen-op-Zoom,) some months before the publication of that book; and I have frequently seen Mr Walter correct the proof sheets for the printer. You may perhaps wonder that Mr Walter never took any steps to contradict the assertion; but that wonder will cease when I tell you that for four years before his death (which was in 1785) he laboured under very severe and painful illnesses, and therefore never heard any thing but newspaper squibs, which he looked upon with contempt. But as it now appears to be published in a work that will be handed down to posterity, that Mr Walter was not the real author, I think it a duty incumbent upon me to endeavour to clear his memory from any imputation of duplicity. Nor can it be supposed that any man would write a book for another to share the greatest part of the advantages. These and many other reasons make me to apply to you, as I should suppose that, as a relation to the deceased, you would be anxious for his fame, as well as,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JANE WALTER."

June 16th, 1789.

"We shall make no other comment on this letter than to observe,

"Mr Robins," says Dr Wilson, "was invited over to assist in the defence of Bergen-op-Zoom, then invested by the French; and he did accordingly set out for that place; but it was entered by the besiegers September 16, 1747, just after his arrival in the Dutch army." This corresponds well with Mrs Walter's statement, and must have its weight in the question.—E.

"SIR,

observe, that it is highly worthy of attention. If it shall give such full satisfaction to our readers as to convince them that Mr Walter was the writer of the voyage in its present form, we shall rejoice in having had an opportunity of doing justice to an injured character."

Such is all the information the Editor has been able to procure on this subject; and he regrets that it is not adequate to what is desirable for the determining it. He might seem invidiously disposed were he positively to decide in the claims, the respective evidences of which, though not logically contradictory, are so much opposed to each other; but he thinks he can hazard no unfavourable imputation, if he should merely state his opinion drawn from the consideration of the testimonies, and the comparison of the style of part of the Narrative, with that of the works which appeared in Mr Robins' name. He thinks, then, in few words, that the Narrative is really the production of Mr Walter, under whose name it appeared, but that it was materially increased in size, if not in real value, by the contributions of Mr Robins; and that the species of those contributions may be condescended on, which of course goes far to determine their amount.]

END OF VOLUME ELEVENTH.

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PART II. BOOK IV.

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